#### A Present from an Enemy

By HOWARD FIELDING, Copyright, 19 04, by Charles W. Hooke.

\*

ON'T bother to light your lamp," said the traveling salesman. "I can see to driok in the dark."

We'll get some moonlight if I leave the curtain up," responded the drug-gist, "though I'm on the shady side of

"I goess that's where you want to the salesman, "The shadler you are the more business you can do. Are

they making you much trouble?"

The druggist had put some glasses and a bottle upon a table and had glauced toward the window to assure himself that no one could see in from the street. The other side of the way was all in vivid moonlight; the snow sparkled with myriad jewels, and the white fronts of the quaint old stores glared as if the worn paint upon them had been miraculously renewed. In the midst of the brightness appeared the tall figure of a man clothed all in black. He walked briskly to one of the stores and balted, disappointed.

There's a customer for you," said the salesman. "Your venerable competitor has shut up shop for the night."
"That man will never come over here," said the druggist. "He traces exclusively with Dr. Columbas Hatch,

my venerable competitor." Matter of sentiment, I suppose Hatch is an old timer, and you're an

The druggist tapped the bottle with a pencil.
"It's a matter of that," he said.

"Temperance crank?" queried the salesman, setting down his glass.

"Well, I'd hardly like to call that fellow a crank," said the druggist. "He's of him than of all the others put to-gether. He'll run me out of this town if I don't look sharp."
"Who is he?"

"Minister of the Stone church, up on Court street. His name is Ormond

The salesman walked to the window and cautiously looked out. The Rev. Mr. Davis was standing on the rickety wooden platform in front of Dr. Co-lumbus Hatch's store and was intently yiewing the moonlight on the river. lis face was clearly Illumined.

That man looks mighty familiar te me," said the salesman. "How long coas be been in this town?"

"A couple of years," was the reply "He seems to have considerable 'pull," even with people who don't go to his church or to any church at all. I've had trouble with him, and I'm going to

This is the first chance I've had to do business for myself," he continued.



"I was clerk in a New York store and was on a vacation when I happened to strike this town. It's a great place in the summer. I stopped off here a few days and found that there was no druggist except that old fossil Hatch, who is the worst probibition crank in the bunch and wouldn't sell whisky even on a prescription.

"Well, I had a few hundred dollars. and I came down here and took this store, getting my stock on credit. In a little more than a year I've squared up everything and have laid some money

"Must be a thirsty town," said Barnes.

"It's a town where the thirsty ones have to come to me," said the druggist, "and take what I give 'em and pay my price for it. See?"

"As I sell you most of your back room stock," said Barnes, with a laugh, "I

see perfectly." Barnes was staring out of the win-

"I believe I'll take a closer look at that fellow," said be. "I'll be back to

a few minutes." The Rev. Mr. Davis had turned from his contemplation of the river and had | begun to ascend the hill. From his window the druggist saw Barnes cross the street and follow in the minister's steps. It may have been twenty minutes later when he returned to the

store. He seemed much perplexed. \*Dr. Sempler, this is a queer case." he said. "I could swear that that fellow is John Davis, whom I used to know fifteen or eighteen years ago in

"Did you speak to him?" asked the

Barnes shook his head.
"He can't be John Davis," he answered, "because John Davis is dead. that he is John Davis you don't want him to be put upon his guard just yet." Sempler showed his excitement.

"You don't mean to tell me that there's anything crooked about this man?" be demanded. "That would be too good to be true."

"I'll give you the facts," said Barnes
"That's all I can do. John Davis was s Gloucester boy, and I used to go there often in the summer. I hadn't any real acquaintance with Davis, but I saw him often. He was clerk in a bank, and the bank was robbed—an inside job. The cashing got most of the money, but Davis was in the game somewhere, and he ran away. They caught him in Bangor and were bring ing him back on a steamer. He was stronger than an ox, and the officer who had him was afraid of him, so be had him handcuffed.

"About four miles north of this town where the steamers run close to Black-burn point, Davis jumped overboard with the handcuffs still on his wrists. That shows what a desperate fellow he was. It was in the evening and quite dark, but the officer saw Davis swimming with his hands stuck out in front of him. Then he sank, and that was the end of him. I wonder that you never heard the story, though it's nearly twenty years old now."

The druggist had started up out of his chair and was leaning forward. staring into Barnes' face. His mouth was half open, but he seemed incapable of speaking. Indeed, his aspect was so strange that Barnes took him by the arm and shook him.

"Handcuffs;" gasped Sempler, and he put up his hands to his forebead.

What the deuce"- his friend began. "Barnes," explained Sempler, "since the world began there has never been anything like this. I can't believe it. The thing is impossible."

He walked to the table and poure out some liquor. His hand was so unsteady that the bottle rattled against

"If's incredible, incredible," he continued, choking with the dery liquid. But, listen. In October I was walking in the woods, up along the shore of the bay by Blackburn point. I had these with me." And he ripped open a cup board and took out a big pair of field glasses, "I started to look out over the bay from a little hill on the point and was adjusting my glasses when I happened to focus them on the top of a spruce tree that grew at the foot of a hill, I saw a queer bunch on the tree, and presently I made it out to be some sort of an iron thing that had piece of chain on it. I took it to be a sort of trap which some boy years ago had hung on the tree and forgotten

Barnes, it was a pair of handcuffo!" "But-but what was it doing way up there on the top of the tree?" stammered Barnes.

"Eighteen years ago," said Sempler that tree wasn't more than six feet "Well?"

"Well, this is what happened," continued Sempler. "Your friend Dayls slipped one of his cuffs in the water and managed to get ashore. Then he alipped the other cuff and tossed them away, and they caught on the tree, or perhaps he hung them up, thinking the tree would hide them. At any rate, there they are, and you know well enough that a pair of handcuffs in that out of the way place settles the whole story. If they're not John Davis' they're not anybody's. The man didn't drown, and I've got him!"

"This is the strangest thing I ever heard of," said Barnes.

"When you mentioned Blackburn point," sald Sempler, "I thought of the only time I was there, and the look of that thing in the tree just leaped up before me like a picture. I must find

"I will find it?" exclaimed Sempler. "And now tell me more about Davis." "I don't know any more," responded Harnes. "I left Gloucester a few weeks afterward and never went back."

"See this man tomorrow and make sure of him."

"I'll do that," said Barnes, "but it must be on the quiet. I don't want to be dragged into anything as a wit-

Sempler laughed.

"It will be quiet," he said. "Do you suppose I'll say a word to anybody? Not much! This is a private matter between the minister and me. I'll let him alone, and be'll let me alone. That's all I'll ask of him. He won't make any trouble if I put up a strong enough bluff. He's engaged to Deacon Holland's daughter-Holland lives right up there by the meeting house-and he won't want his matrimonial plans disturbed, for the deacon has a good bit of money. Barnes"-and he tapped the bottle again with a nervous finger-I'm

all right." "Well," said Barnes, "don't talkdon't, say anything to anybody-and here's luck to you."

About a week later, on the morning of the 12d of December, a pay came

to the house where the nev, ormone pavis was boarding and told him that \* be was wanted at the church. Rightly judging that the matter had to do with the approaching Christmas observ-ances, Mr. Davis promptly responded to this somewhat indefinite summons.

As he turned the corner into Court street he saw a team of horses har-nessed to a sleigh in front of the church, and behind the horses and the vehicle appeared a great green mass which could be nothing but a Christ-mas tree. It had been Mr. Davis' in-

tention to go out into the woods with ome young men of his church that aftsome young men of his church that are groon to secure a tree, and he won-dered what member of his congrega-tion had been so prompt and service-able. His surprise was very great when he perceived that the driver of the team was the new druggist, Ed-

"Mr. Davis," said he as the minister came close, "we haven't been good friends, but I hope we'll be better. I have brought you a peace offering." "I can be at peace with you, Mr. Sempler," replied the clergyman grave



HE PINISHED HIS SENTENCE BY WAVIN

ly, "but I cannot be at peace with liquor selling. I hardly dare to hope that you have decided to stop it." "No," said Sempler slowly, "hardly that. But I am very careful. I never

sell to drunkards"-"You sell to men who will be drunk ards if you don't stop this traffic," said

Davis earnestly. "And if you hope to make any change in my view of this matter" Sempler checked him with a gestur and walked up to the tree. A bit of

gunnybag was wrapped around the trunk near the top. Sempler remove it, and the clergyman beheld with u speakable amazement a pair of bandcuffs grotesquely twisted into the wood.

"By the way," said Sempler, "your first name is John, isn't it?" "Yes," said the minister hoursely.

"What then?" "We can cut these things right out or the tree," said the druggist, "and no-body will ever know that John Davis

wasn't drowned long ago. Otherwise"-He finished the sentence by waving his hand toward Deacon Holland's house, where Holland and his daughter were standing by the gate.

"You see, I've loosened these things so that they can be pulled away," said Sempler, pointing to the handcuffs. 'Now, speak quick, for Holland and Miss Amy are coming this way." Indeed they were coming to look at

"Mr. Holland!" called the minister, at the same time raising his hat, "Please burry up!"

Sempler looked at him and stretches out a hand to pull away the handcuffs from the tree, but the minister caught his wrist in a grip of iron.

"Mr. Holland," he continued as the deacon and his daughter approached, "I have received a singular Christmas gift, and I want you and Miss Amy to

He released Sempler suddenly, push ing him back so that the man staggered to the church wall. Davis pointed to the handcuffs imbedded in the tree, and then held his wrists closely together.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Deacon Holland. "You-you don't mean to tell me that-that those are the very same

"Undoubtedly," replied the minister. "By some miracle this man has found them and has brought them to me. He seems to know a part of my story, but not the whole of it. He does not know that I was weak rather than dishonest; that I was guilty of nothing worse than an attempt to shield a man to whom I thought myself bound by gratltude. He does not know that I eventually returned to Gloucester, where I was held in custody for a brief time and then released. Above all, he does not know that our whole church has

long been aware of the truth and"-"Do you mean to say," demanded the deacon, "that this fellow tried to-to blackmail you?"

"He suggested that we might b friends," responded Davis. "I make no complaint. I am indebted to him. Two years ago, when I laid my story before the church meeting, I was unaware of the extraordinary capacity for keeping a secret. That is a characteristic of your Maine people. I supposed, with all respect to the gentlemen and especially the ladies of my congregation, that I was laying my secret before the entire community. Yet it appears that it has not been mentioned. At least, the fact of my disclosure cannot have come to this man's ears. Now, I do not care to wear a mask, even in

cept his gift publicly. I shall take these handcuffs, this badge of my old folly, publicly from this tree, and I shall attempt to extract a moral from it in a brief address. Does this course

meet your view, Amy?"
"I trust both your judgment and your honor," said she,

"Sempler," asid Dencon Holland, " you weren't ruined in this communit before, you certainly are now. Whe this story gets around the worst : in town will be ashamed to be

going into your store."

It remains to be said that this prophecy was fulfilled to all intents and purposes very speedily.

Learn to say "Pears" when you ask for soap. There are other soaps, of course, but Pears' is best for you and matchless for the complexion.



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